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Travels in  
European Countries

FRANK ARMSTRONG

TRAVELS  
IN  
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

BY  
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A SERIES OF LETTERS  
WRITTEN  
WHILE JOURNEYING THROUGH EUROPE.

## LETTER I.

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ANTWERP, PARIS, THE SWISS MOUNTAINS,  
VENICE AND GENOA.

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I LANDED in New York by the steamer City of New York on the 28th of August, but as I agreed with some acquaintances I made on the other side to wait there for them, I stopped over until their arrival, which was in about ten days. I went to Tiknon, N. Y., to try to get rid of the hay fever, but the only thing that bothered me was, if it didn't get rid of me first. I hadn't been in New York twenty-four hours until it came on me with the violence of a delayed cyclone. Although it was about a month behind time, it was certainly making up for all delay. I felt no symptoms of it whatever until I arrived on this side.

I had a letter prepared for the GAZETTE as far along as my second visit to Switzerland (except polishing it up a little) but lost it somewhere while standing on my head in the Swiss mountains. I was so disgusted with this waste of literary ability that I did not resume it.

The distance from New York to Antwerp, my landing place on the other side is about 3,500 miles, and we were twelve days making it over. Many misfit breakfasts were donated to the fishes by sea-sick passengers, although we had comparatively good weather. Some people would get sea-sick, however, I think, looking at a canal boat captain. I never experienced the slightest symptoms of it going or coming. Our chief amusement going over came from a man who styled himself a "Palmist and Physiognomist," a diviner of the past, present and future by the face and hands, who insisted on unfolding the pedigree of every one on board.



He was a bright and pleasing talker, but I think knew less of palmistry than I do about astronomy. As I barely know a full moon when I see it, this gives him a tolerably low rating.

For instance, he told me that I was passionately fond of classical music. I stunned him somewhat when I told him that I

#### WOULD RATHER SIT ON A WIRE FENCE

and listen to a planing mill than in an upholstered rocker to classical music, and would rather hear a nice tune on a gong any time. This was about as near as he hit it on any of the passengers, but it was his misses that furnished the amusement. In appearance he looked for all the world like Terre Haute's Tom Glazebrook.

Many of the distressing accompaniments that attend a trip overland do not prevail on board of ship. There is no soprano-voiced brakemen, no diamond-bespangled, despotic conductors, no cormorants charge on refreshment stands, no waiting at Buck Creek siding for number six, no firing off tramps, no cows on the track, no peanut fiends, no noise, no dust, no heat. It is but fair to add no paper every evening. When it is noon in Terre Haute it is along about milking time in Antwerp, the difference being five hours and thirty-two minutes. By this method of reckoning the cablegram I sent from there reached home before it started. Antwerp is not a town of mushroom growth. It was founded 1200 years ago and still it is not an extraordinary large city. It has very irregular and tortuous streets. One might live there fifty years and couldn't find his way home ten blocks off without a pocket guide of the town. First among its public buildings is the Cathedral and in it some of the best jobs of painting that the celebrated artist, Peter Paul Rubens, ever turned out. Rubens could paint pictures

as well as Rod Maguire can paint the side of a house. I suppose he is touching up angel wings on the other shore now, having been long ago laid away in the church of St. Jacques, a short distance from the Cathedral. Speaking about cathedrals, I should hate to be a dog in Antwerp. Such a howling lot of locomotives I never saw before. They are the chief propelling force of almost everything in Antwerp from a milk cart to a four-in-hand. It was a very strange sight to me.

I believe a profitable commerce might be established between Terre Haute and Antwerp if Secretary Thompson would correspond with the dog authorities there, setting forth the advantages of Terre Haute as a dog producing center. We could certainly furnish them cheaper than any other dog mart in the world. It's an unlucky dog that's born in Antwerp. He has his day, of course, but it's when he is dead.

I went direct

#### FROM ANTWERP TO PARIS.

As I never studied French but two hours and twenty minutes, I soon found on my arrival there that I must have a guide. I can understand French a little, of course, when it is spoken very slowly, say about three weeks between each word. After procuring a guide, the first place we visited was the Eiffel (pronounced FL) tower. It is pretty good for high, but Chicago will probably hold four aces, as usual, and raise it. I looked at it a long time before I would assent to the ascent. It would certainly be a good way to economize in funeral expenses by making an unsupported descent from the top. There would be no remains of the remains. It would hardly be found necessary to ballast one's self either to attain a greater velocity than the laws of gravitation

would furnish; the descent would be satisfactorily swift. The top contains a restaurant and a horde of souvenir fiends.

The entire length of the sewers of Paris is about 300 miles. An excursion can be made through them on a tram-way that runs along the principal portion. I should hate to swap clothes with a man that had made an excursion through a Terre Haute sewer.

The catacombs extend under about one-tenth of the whole area of Paris, and it is calculated that they contain the remains of over three million persons. I think it was in 1784, my guide told me, that the bones of all persons buried in the cemeteries round about were ordered removed to the catacombs. When they were first placed here, there was no attempt at order or system in their arrangement, but were thrown in promiscuously. A few years later an effort was made to sort them out, but as they could never get the bones to match very well it was given up. I should think this would be a fine shape for a man to be in and be suddenly called to judgment and have to sail around through those dark passages hunting himself up. He would probably never reach St. Peter in time to answer his number, and if he did would like as not have half of somebody else that belonged where nobody wants to go.

#### THE CHURCHES AND CATHEDRALS OF PARIS

looking at their fine paintings, etc. In the evening, for a change of scenery, I went to the "can can" and some kindred amusements.

I have always heard so much about the use of horse flesh in Paris that I longed to go to a regular horse restaurant and have a meal. I wanted to go in and sit down and ask the waiter to pass the horse, and give me a little of the stewed colt and have the flies minded off with a horse tail, but I

failed to find anything of the kind. I think it is somewhat of a myth.

A temperance ordinance in Paris would have about as much effect as a chigger bite on a rhinoceros. All hours of the day and all hours of the night the Parisians sit by thousands at little tables placed on the sidewalks in front of their favorite cafes and sip wine, absinthe and other French concoctions, one-third, probably, being ladies.

Paris is said to be the best lighted city in the world; in fact, it is called the "City of Lights." Not only the central portion, but all the environs are brilliantly, brightly and dazingly lighted. I expected on the first night after viewing this dazzling scene that when I came to retire I would be handed with a royal flourish a flaming flambeaux that would flood every nook, niche, corner and crevice in the passage way to my room, but I received nothing of the kind. I got instead a pale, sickly, consumed-looking candle that didn't give as much light as an energetic fire-bug, with greasy tears streaming down its sides, seemingly crying because it was dying. It had to be carried with the stealthy tread of a Bill Hicks to keep it from going out. When I came to my room

#### I STRUCK A MATCH

to find a good place to set it down, and another one to see how to blow it out, and went to bed. And this is the light of the hotel rooms of all Europe, the same as I went to bed by forty years ago. Very few of even the best hotels of Europe have elevators, and I will agree any time to climb a tree faster than the swiftest of them can run. They do not call them elevators, but "lifts," which I never could think of but invariably called them "hists." I was in Paris eight days, but was on the move all the time and saw about all of it I cared for. I visited the tomb of Napoleon, the grave of



LaFayette, the Column Vendome, the Chamber of Deputies, the Louvre, with its miles of paintings, and many other places of interest.

From Paris I went to Lausanne, Switzerland, the birth-place of our former fellow townsman, Frederick Schwingrouber, now a resident of Hoboken, N. J. At his request I called on a relative of his there. Lausanne is a very pretty little city located on Lake Geneva and faces the Savoy Alps.

From Lausanne I went by steamer to Geneva, which is a perfect gem of a Swiss city, situated in full view of Mount Blanc. Its principal industry, in fact about the only one, is the manufacture of musical wares and watches.

From Geneva I went to Turin, Italy, passing through the Mount Cenis tunnel, seven and a quarter miles in length. I went through it in the night, which I suppose was a very good time, as you can't see anything night or day.

From Turin I went to Genoa, a wonderfully queer old town. The buildings are of great height and many of the streets extremely narrow. They look more like a crack in the wall than a street. I often saw neighbors shaking hands across the street from top windows of seven-story buildings. Genoa, every one admits, has the finest cemetery in Europe. It consist of long marble corridors capable of holding the remains of 800,000 persons, and its capacity is being increased. The graves,

#### IF THEY CAN BE CALLED GRAVES,

for they are all encased with solid marble, are marked with splendid monuments, such as only an Italian can design and erect. This is for the rich, however. The poor are buried in the earth and are taken up every five years and placed in a large pit properly registered and numbered. If any of their friends should wish to re-inter them all they

have to do is to call at the pit, present their check and get their bones. By the way, this is where Chris-what's-his-name lived before he took it into his head to go west. I was up to his house, that is, the house where he was born and lived. His father kept a mattress shop in the lower rooms, so my guide told me. I was glad we didn't have war with Italy. We ought to feel thankful to Italians. If it hadn't been for Columbus we might be waiting around yet to be born. There are many things in Genoa relative to Columbus and his discovery, of great interest, most of which I saw.

From Genoa I went to Pisa (pronounced p z); although I didn't arrive in Pisa until after midnight, I was looking at the leaning tower by six o'clock the next morning. It has stood at the same inclination for over 700 years, yet I would have bet dollars to dimes that the day I came was the day it was going to fall. It consists of eight stories, formed of arches and supported by pillars, and the elevation of the whole is about 180 feet. A splendid view of the country can be had from the top. I think if I was a resident tax payer in the vicinity of Pisa I should petition the road supervisor or the township trustee, or whatever official designation leaning towers come under, to have the old thing straightened up. After one has looked at it for an hour or two, it grows tiresome watching it trying to fall and can't. But if the leaning tower was ever straightened Pisa would be booked. It is a breadwinner for them. Thousands journey there yearly to see it. Lake Maxinkuckee with the water out would have about as many visitors as Pisa without her tower. Pisa proves to be 4,000 years old, and she looks it.

I tried to keep track of the population of the various cities I visited, but partially gave it up, as about the only American characteristic Europeans seem to possess is that they

will lie about their population. Genoa said Pisa had 25,000; Pisa claims 52,000.

FROM PISA I JOURNEYED TO ROME.

"Rome that sat upon her seven hills." If she has a few more explosions like the last one she will be sitting on somebody else's hills. I suppose there never was such a unanimity of feeling among the citizens of Rome in the matter of arising as there was on the morning of that explosion. It occurred at an hour when nearly all were in bed, but they were all simultaneously blown out. I suppose when they are in Rome they must do as Rome does, however. My guide told me that there was not a window in the entire city but what was more or less damaged. St. Paul's church, away to the west and south was damaged to the extent of \$50,000 by the breaking of her fine stained windows. Over in the immediate neighborhood of the explosion there is a whole lot of nothing and a little patch of ground left.

As I had not seen any bones for nearly a week, I went to the catacombs of St. Catixtus. It is a very pleasant place to while away an hour or two down three stories under ground among the remains of a million. I was shown through by a monk from a monastery near the entrance, who seemed to have a morbid appetite for handling bones and reading inscriptions back in the third and fourth centuries. Such a labyrinth of narrow, crooked passages he led me through with a candle can hardly be imagined. There are five other catacombs besides this one, and in them are interred, so I was informed, seven million persons, the passages being in all about eight hundred miles in length. As I was a little pressed for time I didn't go entirely through.

Rome has now about 400,000 inhabitants. Two thousand years ago she is said to have had two millions.

Rome has three hundred and sixty-seven churches,

## MANY OF THEM RUN ON THE EUROPEAN PLAN.

You pay for what you get. I wore my pants pockets slick going down after gratuities. I went to see, among others, St. Peter's, the largest church in the world. If it were in Terre Haute we would soon have a line of rapid transit through it. There is no sense in a man having to camp out before he can reach his favorite praying place. The services seem to be perpetual. How any one can do a good job of worshiping with a lot of visitors gazing around at the contents of the church while it is all being explained in a loud voice by the guides is more than I can tell, but they don't seem to mind it. My guide as good as told a man who seemed to be in the zenith of some special plea, to move his prayers a little further along so that I could get a better squint at the painting of some Evangelist. It seemed to me at the time if this man had thrown in a little dash of profanity with his prayers in this kind of a case it would all have been lumped off together and placed on the credit side of the golden book. I said, after going through the catacombs and about half a dozen churches which were jammed full of bones, that I wouldn't go to any more boneries for a month, but my guide insisted that I should go to the order of the Capuchin monks. This proved by all odds the finest bone shop I had run on to yet. All the walls and ceilings are inlaid with human bones and skulls, arranged in fanciful devices—splendid designs in festoons, wreaths, roses, garlands, etc. One of especially fine design was a panel of backbone mosaics which was not quite completed, they being just at that time out of that style of material. Six thousand of these monks are worked up in this manner.

## I VISITED THE COLISEUM,

one of the grandest ruins of old Rome, if ruins can be called grand. It was calculated to hold from 80,000 to 100,000



people who assembled there to witness the gladiatorial and wild beast combats, which so much delighted the Roman populace in those days. It was dedicated in the year 80, 1811 short years ago. At its inauguration it is said that 5,000 wild beasts and 10,000 Christians were slain, three aqueducts being barely sufficient to carry away the blood. I suppose it was about the best show they had in town for months. The old Romans must have been an extremely tender-hearted people.

Rome runs entirely to antiquity and ruins. I am a very low grade archæologist, but I venture to say that if all the antiquities so far discovered were placed in a straight line a pony express couldn't pass them in a month. I saw enough pieces of the true cross in Rome alone to build a wood-shed. It's impossible to dig a hole deep enough anywhere in or around Rome to bury a wagon load of turnips without resurrecting some old sphinx or fossil of some kind, and if a man starts to dig a well he is a good deal surer to smash into somebody's old house-top a hundred or so feet down than he is to find water. Herculaneum, near Naples, was discovered in this way. Anything that hasn't a "before-Christ" label on it they regard as a novelty in Rome. I enjoyed the visit there very much.

From Rome I went to Naples. I was told before I left home, by people who had traveled in Europe, that they never experienced any trouble by reason of being unable to speak a foreign language. They said: "You will always find some one around that can speak a little English." I found it entirely different. I was in Italy about one month, and during that time I never saw a sign that I could tell whether the proprietor of any establishment

WAS A WELL-DIGGER OR JUDGE OF A COURT

unless I had some one with me that knew. So long as I

kept a touch of elbows with a guide I could get along fairly well; when I left him I was an infant. Some of the most ludicrous things happened me when I was trying to engineer myself. More fun and misery can be extracted out of two hours self-steering experience than could be from Barnum and Forepaugh's circuses combined. Among the many was on arriving in Naples. I wanted to go to the office of Thomas Cook & Son, and showed a card with their names printed on it to a man strolling on the streets. He seemed to know just what I wanted, and after half an hour's winding through the crooked streets of Naples landed me in an aquarium. No explanations, gestures or signs could make him understand that that was not the place I wanted. He, possibly, took me for a fish. You will encounter just such things as this constantly. I had several Americans relate to me much more exasperating experiences. There was one consoling thing in the matter, however, I could perforate them with profanity to my heart's content and they would walk off with a bow and a smile that would grace a Chesterfield thinking I was thanking them for receiving the exact information I wanted. It makes me feel proud for a man to bow to me when I cuss him. I saw Americans at small way stations, trying to buy some little article of food for themselves or families that was not displayed on the lunch stand, and one would leave the best Humpty Dumpty pantomime on earth to watch it. They couldn't have

BOUGHT A CRACKER WITH A HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL,

because how would they know, or anybody else know, that didn't know what a cracker was in Italian? I might start out in Rome to-day, if I were there, and would probably meet 25,000 persons who could give me a complete history of the rise, decline and fall of the Roman Empire in their own language before I would meet one who could tell me in

English where to buy a cake of soap. This was what knocked out the sub-contractors and mechanics in the Tower of Babel scheme. Their language got "pied." When a mechanic wanted a bucket of mortar the contractor thought he was calling for his time, and paid him off. When he called for his time he got mortar.

To all those persons who have traveled in foreign speaking countries without difficulty, and are unacquainted with the language, I concede divine power.

## LETTER II.

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NAPLES, VESUVIUS, FLORENCE AND VENICE.

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SOME one has said: "See Naples and die." I don't know but what if a man's business is in anything like a fair shape it would be a good plan to die first, not but what there is plenty to be seen, but it is a duel to the death almost to see it. Naples has a population of about six hundred thousand. Five hundred thousand of these are beggars and the balance hackmen.

One of the first places I went was with a party to the Island of Capri, seventeen miles out in the Mediterranean. We wanted to go to the Blue Grotto, the principal attraction, but the sea was too rough to enter. Along with the expense of the round trip we paid for donkeys to traverse the Island, which is very mountainous. I received for this purpose a half-finished vest-pocket edition of a donkey, that if it had been polished up a little and mounted wouldn't have made a bad-looking watch charm. I stepped over it once or twice in shifting the rigging, as a matter of economy in time. When I got aboard I saw I had to walk anyway, so I caught step with it and we started. It was the first time I ever walked horseback.

### IF THE DONKEY HAD STOPPED

I should have probably walked on without noticing the difference unless I might have stranded on its ears. The only real use the animal was to me was that it knew the way and I didn't. I think Kodak cuts of this scene would sell well. On returning I complained of the donkey's inefficiency, but as the owner didn't know near as much English as the don-



key I gave up all thoughts of redress. I have a picture at home, the scene of which is taken from this island, although when I bought it I didn't think I should ever see it. In fact, I didn't know at the time whether Capri was in Madagascar or Kansas. These donkeys are an institution of Naples. They are nearly all of the most diminutive species, but carry loads with a smile that an elephant would rebel under, and all they ask in return is a nice little feed of gravel once a week and a couple of substantial draughtings a day.

I went out to the Armstrong gun factory, a few miles from Naples, probably more on account of the name than anything else. They manufacture cannon of the largest calibre. It was the first thing I saw in Italy run by steam, and as it was an English firm, I expected, when I sent up my card, "Frank Armstrong, Terre Haute, Ind.," that all the directors, with, possibly, the president, would come down and escort me through. They didn't, however, but after a long time a man came down with my card in his hand and

ASKED ME IF I WAS FROM INDIA.

Whether he judged from my complexion or the "I-n-d." on the card that I was from that country, I never learned. After another long delay, myself and guide were shown through by a lame Italian, but I don't recollect much of the second-hand information I received relative to the concern. On the return we stopped at a macaroni factory. Their method of manufacture is very primitive. Half a dozen swarthy employes teeter up and down on a large beam to mash the dough. The remainder of the process through which it passes is of the same high order of improved machinery. It is dried for the most part on large canvas sheets spread on the streets. A buzzard would bolt a skunk's carcass any time to smell a macaroni factory. Large

quantities of macaroni are consumed in Naples. It would be

#### IMPOSSIBLE TO RUN A MOONSHINE MACARONI FACTORY.

Its location could be traced by a man whose nostrils had grown shut. Pass the macaroni—to the barrel for me.

Soldiers in Italy receive two cents a day and found. It seems to me I would soon be hard to find on this salary. She has the largest standing army, next to Germany, I believe, being about two million. You can't walk ten steps on any street without caroming on a soldier.

Of course I went to Vesuvius. One might as well start to see the sights of New York and stop over altogether at Sing Sing as to go to Naples and not see Vesuvius. I went with a party from the excursion office of Cook & Son. There were three persons in our carriage, a Russian, a German and myself—a fine combination for intellectual enjoyment. If we could only have had a mummy and a deaf and dumb man the pleasure of the trip, so far as conversation was concerned, would have been materially heightened, because they wouldn't have tried to say anything back. We all tried so hard to understand each other that really when we arrived at the top I hardly knew which one of them I was. It was four hours by carriage, a short distance by rail, which, by the way, is the only road I ever saw that only had one rail; then half an hour's climb or carried in sedan to the summit. The avalanche of beggars and hideous deformities that followed us up that mountain I won't forget soon. Jim-jams or night-mare might produce their equal, but I don't know. About half way up it took on the nature of a jam, and we had to purchase our right of way for the remainder. It seems to me

## IF BOB INGERSOLL COULD GET A FEW WHIFFS

of the sulphurous blasts that are emitted from that crater and the fissures round about, it might modify his views somewhat relative to certain coming events.

Vesuvius was very active when we were there, but not any more so than I was about getting away after having one look down into it. If a man was obliged to be in purgatory by a certain date I could certainly recommend that route as the most direct. I read in the London papers, shortly after leaving Naples, of a young South American gentleman who fell in, a few days after we left, by the crust giving way, his comrade being barely saved by their guide. About a week before we went up, there had been an eruption that filled the entire valley as far up as we could see. We walked around there at the expense of a pair of shoes and beheld a much grander sight than had been seen on top. It was all still at a white heat, and could not be approached very closely. This is one of mother earth's sorest carbuncles, and when it comes to a head the core and corruption must come out. On these particular occasions it's a very good plan to stand from under.

Early the next morning after the ascent of Vesuvius, our same party left with a guide for a visit to

## THE RUINS OF POMPEII.

The guide could speak half a dozen languages, as most guides can, and we got along much better. It is about an hour by rail, and as it was only a short distance from the station, we had essayed to walk.

Strangers may know when they want a cab in most any other city in the world except Naples and vicinity, but the cabmen there are your guardians in this little matter. Such an array of hungry, voracious, clamoring cabmen as was

at that station I never met before nor since. They were determined we should ride, and we were determined to walk. Each one of us fought and swore in our own language, the guide doing some splendid work in his. It looked at one time as though we were going to win, until one of them drove over the dutchman's foot, when the silver lining disappeared. For myself I had been ready to compromise long before our forces were thus weakened by hiring the whole caravan if we could have got anything like decent rates, for I was dying to see Pompeii. Finally the guide said he guessed it was

THE SAME PRICE WHETHER WE WALKED OR RODE,

so we hired one of them at his own price, which seemed to appease the balance. The guide called this the "battle of Pompeii." This occurred just as I have told you, and may give you an idea of some of the perplexities that are mixed with the pleasures of seeing Europe, especially Italy.

Pompeii was buried nearly seventeen hundred years before its discovery, which was in 1748. But little more than one-third of the city is at present uncovered, and it is estimated that it will require sixty-six years yet before its entire area will be disintombed. My only wonder is if the numeral system has been sufficiently extended to enable them to calculate at all the number of years it will take yet. They have about two dozen school children excavating with sugar spoons, and they remove about as much of its covering in a day as an Irishman would with a spade in fifteen minutes. If this catastrophe had occurred in America it would have been uncovered in six months and the whole business moved to Chicago and

PAYING FIVE HUNDRED PER CENT. ON THE INVESTMENT.

So far, every person that has been taken out are dead.



The museum at Naples contains nearly all the discoveries so far made, and it is a wonderful as well as a solemn portion to examine. The character of the frescoes that still remain on some of the walls would seem to indicate that human nature was weak and frail in those days as well as now. We were there about half the day, and I found it the most interesting thing I saw during my entire trip. Herculaneum is another victim of Vesuvius, or one of its neighbors, but is covered much deeper. Although it is but a short distance from Pompeii, we did not go to see it. We did not care to be ambushed by hackmen twice in the same day.

For barbarous barbers commend one to Italy. Heavy rewards and a prize medal would never have brought in designs for a more uncomfortable chair than they use. The only attempt at upholstering is that it is made of soft instead of hard wood. I would rather get shaved hanging up on a peg. They set you bolt upright in it, and lather you about as much where your whiskers are not as where they are. I thought the first one I tackled was also going to shave the fuzz off of my coat collar. He had plenty of lather on it to do so. They no sooner get one whisker pulled out than they jump on to another one and pull that out, too. When they think they have tortured you fifteen cents worth a boy holds a soup tureen filled with water under your chin and you wash your own face. Then he gives you a rasping towel to dry it.

They have a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals,

#### BUT NONE FOR MEN.

It is not far from Naples over to Africa, but as I was not much acquainted in Africa, I did not go over. I met Horace Pugh in Naples and passed two most pleasant days with him. Hod is looking first rate, and seems much better

pleased with his appointment at Palermo than with the one he held in England, the climate agreeing with him much better. He and I went through the King's palace there, and found it quite a gorgeous affair. He has twenty-three others scattered over the kingdom and villas innumerable. I don't suppose he could find his way to half of them without a pilot. I think King Humbert is inclined to be somewhat expensive any way. I understood, while in Rome, that the curtains in his bed-chamber there cost \$400,000; mine cost thirty-five cents the running yard. This shows that people can economize when they try.

It would take a fine suit of clothes for the language to tell respectably of the indecency of certain customs of the people of Naples; as I don't seem to have any that fit, I won't attempt it. I shall never forget Naples, but won't say anything further about it for the present.

From Naples I went to Florence. I had long heard of the beauties of Florence, but after a day's ride throughout its length and breadth, I failed to detect it. Turin is the most modern, and to my mind, the prettiest city in Italy, and I was in every one in the Kingdoms of any consequence except those of Sicily. I thought, while in France, that it ran greatly to painting and the fine arts, but it is about what a spelling book is to Col. Thompson's library as compared with Italy. Every city, village, town, and hamlet in Italy is stuffed, jammed and crammed with paintings—all by the old masters, of course. They wouldn't hang a painting in a barn-loft that was not by one of the old masters. I became such an expert on painting that I could do up a gallery in two hours that it took some slow-going pedestrians two weeks to do. The time required depended entirely whether I was or was not in good sprinting form. I often took a whirl through them as a sort of "constitutional." The Pitti gallery in Florence commences on the east side of and runs

across the river on an old bridge built over seven hundred years ago, and then extends somewhere out into the suburbs, but still I did the whole business in less than an hour, and am willing to bet that I can reduce the record. It's the fastest track, however, I think I was on, being very smooth and straight. People looked after me as though they

#### THOUGHT I WAS GOING AFTER A DOCTOR

or had to catch a train, but I was not. I was simply doing the great Pitti gallery, so if any of the art critics should ask me after I got home if I had been through it I could truthfully answer in the affirmative. I despise to lie about such things. I met an American in Florence who was the most disgusted man with paintings imaginable. He said he couldn't tell a picture of the Lord's Supper from a scene at a Donnybrook fair, yet he had been dragged by guides through so many weary miles of paintings of defunct martyrs and evangelists that he would rather sit down any time and examine the pictures on a seven-up deck.

I procured permission and went through the royal stables in Florence. I think if Barnum had ever seen this stunning lay-out he would have lived twenty years longer. I became half-dazed wandering around among the gold and silver chariots and admiring the superb horses and the magnificent equipages. I almost wished I could have been kicked to death by one of these horses and have the news flashed across that a two dollar American had been killed by a million dollar horse, right in the King's own stables. But I felt satisfied at the time I would have no such luck, and that I would go back home and probably fall into somebody's tanyard vat, or be run over by an ash cart, or die in some other inglorious and unpoetical way.

From Florence I went to Venice. I had intended to stop over at Bologna, but as I learned there was nothing there of

particular interest except some large sausage plants, I did not do so, but continued on to Venice.

"There is a glorious city in the sea,  
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,  
Ebbing and flowing, and the soft sea weed  
Clings to the marble of her palaces.  
No trace of man, no footsteps to and fro,  
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the sea,  
Invisible; and from the land we went  
As to a floating city—steering in,  
And gliding up her streets as in a dream."

I had to draw on another poet for these lines. Every one that goes to Venice writes, or tries to write, a few soft verses about it. Some of it is very soft, even mushy. I tried for a long time to substitute something for the above, but

#### MY MUSE SEEMS TO HAVE GOT DAMAGED

in some way. Any muse that would prompt its proprietor to try to rhyme "Venice" with "canal" for an hour and a half is certainly pretty badly run down. If I had ever over-worked it I wouldn't have been surprised at the way it acted, but to have it strike at the very time I needed it makes one certain at least that I will never contract to furnish any poetry that has to be delivered at a certain date.

It seemed funny to me to be met at the railroad station by a long line of gondolas instead of wheeled vehicles. I understood, while in Venice, that there is not nor never was a horse in the place, and it is a large city. If you should talk to a Venetian about a horse he would believe that you meant horse and horse, first dash, high man out. There are plenty of people there that never saw a horse, and wouldn't know what it was if they met one. They would be as much surprised at seeing a horse as we would to see a camel walk into a dry goods store. There are no runaways in Venice. Everything glides. It's a wonderful transformation from



sound to silence. It seemed to me when I arrived there that I had come from a rolling-mill to a cemetery.

Venice would certainly be an angler's paradise.

THERE IS GOOD FISHING OUT OF EVERY WINDOW, and the back door on Sundays. You can fish from the kitchen and land your catch in the frying-pan. It would also be a splendid home for retired street sprinklers and street commissioners. They would have nothing to annoy them in the thoughts of their former occupations. The streets are always in repair. Nature attends to that contract. When the tide recedes all accumulations are carried off.

The Bridge of Sighs is not a bridge of size. It is, however, under the first spelling, if all the things I was told about it and the palace and prison which it connects are true.

Venice is connected by over four hundred bridges, the Rialto, across the Grand Canal, being famous as where Colonel Shylock kept his jewelry store.

A gondolier steers, pilots and propels his boat at all times from the same side by placing his oar in a half moon incision cut in a large peg. No one in the world can do this except a Venetian gondolier. He will dart around a corner with the speed and grace of an Axtell and avert a collision by an inch with two fish-tail splashes of his oar. I tried to hold the oar in the notch with both hands without attempting any of the other accomplishments of gondola navigation, but don't think I could have done it even if it had been riveted there.

I have heard a great deal about Venetian beauties, but can't say that I came across any of them that possessed the ravishing beauty I have heard described. They are of all shades and grades.

Some are dark, some are fair,

Some are the color of a sausageaire,

but none of them, in my estimation, extremely beautiful.

### LETTER III.

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ITALY, SWITZERLAND AND HOLLAND.

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FROM Venice I went to Verona. This place is the scene of the Romeo and Juliet mash. Heavy earthquakes occurred in this vicinity while I was in Rome, doing a great amount of damage. This is one of the beauties of living in Italy, you never can tell when you are going to swap lots with a man and have both of them delivered.

From Verona I went to Milan. The chief object of interest in Milan is the cathedral. It hardly reached the anticipation I had worked up for it, but this may have arisen from the fact that cathedrals are as abundant in Italy as cow-sheds are in America. I got so I could despatch a cathedral of any dimensions in about the same time it would require me to look through a country school house. The one at Milan is, however, a wonderful structure. In fact, it couldn't be otherwise. It was begun about the time Methuselah cast his first vote, and they can't tell by looking at the plans whether it is anywhere near done yet. My guide said there were four hundred spires that they knew of that had to be erected yet. In order to form a correct idea of the exterior decorations, it is necessary to ascend to its roof. One is lost in the forest of ornaments, spires, statues, pinnacles and fret-work piled about in rich confusion. By reason of the peculiar contour of the exterior, which abounds in a surprising number of nooks and recesses,

MORE BEGGARS CAN LEAN UP AGAINST IT

than any other cathedral I saw in all Italy. These beggars beggar description. They throng the thresholds and invade the

interior of all the churches. I have often seen them jerk a man's coat tail and pump assistance from him while he was busy with his devotions. There is enough gold and silver toggery and costly gems locked up in the treasury of this cathedral alone to buy every beggar in Italy a new suit of clothes and a hundred dollars worth of macaroni. But they keep their gems and jewels and hiss their beggars on American tourists. I am not an expert on religious matters, but it seems to me their religion ought to be condensed and their charities enlarged. Their charity needs yeast in it. For myself, I would rather worship at the foot of a dunghill than in this costly edifice at Milan, if it would relieve me of the dismal apparitions that infest it, and others like it, in the shape of beggars.

From Milan I went to the Italian lakes, where I spent two days on lakes Como, Lugano and Maggiore. A scene from the last named lake once adorned a drop curtain at our Opera House. Although I traversed its entire length, I failed to recognize the exact spot where Mr. Pigott, the artist, located the subject of the scene. At least I didn't see any Italian maidens standing around dressed in crimson jackets twanging mandolins. I did see a great many, but they were all down on their knees washing faded fabrics on a flat rock slanted into the edge of the lake. This wouldn't look well on a drop curtain, however.

This ended my tour in Italy. I wouldn't have missed it for any money, nor go over it again for a plumber's income. It's a wonderful country to see. Still, in some respects, it is very much like America. The moon isn't any larger; the sun sets in the west, and you can't get anything on credit unless your credit is good.

From Milan I went to Lucerne, Switzerland. Lucerne is situated on the lake of the same name, which is universally admitted to be the finest of the Swiss lakes. At home I have

had certain persons call me an idiot, but I never paid much attention to the charge. But when I came to check the whole thing up at Lucerne, I found their statements nearly correct. Any man that would

SPEND HIS GOOD MONEY AND THREE DAYS OF HIS TIME

by hiring two men with a rope and other mountain tackle to pull him up on top of the Swiss Alps, where he could sit around on icebergs and eat snow and get mixed up with the clouds and have to hold on the rainbows to keep from being blown off, and then be lowered down to a mountain hut, they called a hotel, and pay a dollar for a peat fire to get thawed out, is an idiot. But this is what I did. No one ever heard of a horse breaking out of his stall and rushing up on top of a mountain to get frozen to death. They have too much horse sense. No other animals but chamois, billy goats and men do this. It is comforting to note, however, that this particular breed of idiots are being gradually exterminated. Only recently seven were blown from the top of the Jungfrau at one time. Mount Blanc and the other Swiss peaks

HAVE CONTRIBUTED HANDSOMELY,

and it is now only a matter of time until they become extinct. But it is something like the Italian picture galleries. The mountains have to be done as well. It is, in fact, about the only way to gain an idea of the grandeur of Swiss scenery. It can't be done by rail. Swiss railroads have a very bad habit of running under their towns and scenery instead of through them. I passed two thousand feet directly under the town of Andermatt, and the next day drove through it in a carriage.

The first American flag I saw after leaving home was in Switzerland. An enterprising hotel-keeper floated it from



his hotel top. He was not an American, however, but unfurled it as a bid for American patronage, and the scheme worked beautifully. It reminded one of the Irish landlord who was trying to cater to both Irish and American customers, and he put up a sign: "Erin go unum E pluribus bragh."

On the way from Milan to Lucerne

I PASSED THROUGH THE GREAT ST. GOTHARD  
TUNNEL,

the longest in the world, being, I think, nine and a quarter miles in length. Five hundred tin canned dogs would have been the music of one of Breinig's best medleys as compared with the caroming echoes that our train stirred up in its passage through that tunnel. It would have been a positive pleasure to have been stricken deaf and dumb for the time.

I went to Altdorf, a short distance from Lucerne. This is the place where that celebrated crack shot, William Tell, shot the apple from his son's head at the command of the tyrant Gessler. The place where the tree stood to which his son was bound is marked by a monument surmounted with a statue of Tell. The money is now on hand for the erection of a much more imposing one. His name and memory are as much honored and revered in that country as Washington's in this. About a half mile from Altdorf is his birthplace.

From Lucerne I also made the ascent of the Riga. It is a kind of a Jules Verne trip to the moon. We passed declivities so high that if our car should have tumbled over the passengers would have had ample time to have made their wills and direct as to their funerals before they would have landed. Switzerland is a poet's and painter's paradise and hades. They are constantly trying to depict its sublimities

with verse and brush, but they no sooner get their attempt done than they tear it up, disgusted with their failure. In the language of our Hoosier poet: "'Tis a pictur which a painter aint no coloring to mock."

From Lucerne I went to Bale. On arriving at Bale, which is on the line between Switzerland and Germany, all passengers change cars, conductors, currency and language; likewise have their baggage examined. This examination of baggage is certainly an infernal nuisance. Its enough to convert a howling protectionist into a ranting, raving free-trader. My baggage was explored at least twenty-five times during my trip. I wouldn't any more than get my garments turned right side out again until some other pirate wanted to see if I had anything he wanted. I generally kept enough unlaundried wear on hand to hasten the examination materially. My feelings on this subject may be somewhat intensified, however, from the fact that I had to pay duty at the New York port on every little thing I brought over, instead of sliding it through, as I had figured on. Taking a trunk to Europe is also a great nuisance. It would have been better for me to have done like the man who gave the jeweler fifty cents and his watch to fix it. It would have been positive economy on my part to have given my trunk and contents to some one at the outstart and paid for having it delivered at their house. In nearly all the continental countries no baggage is free except hand baggage, and the charges are very excessive. As they give no checks you have to look after it like you were

#### TRAVELING WITH AN INVALID MOTHER-IN-LAW.

I asked a man in Bale what time the train left for Strasburg. I didn't have any idea he could understand me, but he did. He said it went "Mit 9:14 und 5:00 o'clock." This was exactly what he said. Although I was uncertain as to

the train, I felt positive I was in Germany. If I had tripped up on the Swiss line and fell headlong into a barrel of kraut it would not have been more convincing.

"You nearly always find some one around that can speak a little English."

From Bale I went to Strasburg. I stopped at Strasburg principally to see that wonderful Strasburg clock, located in the cathedral there. It is a wonder, much more so than I had expected to see. They couldn't get along without it there. It does about half the public chores around town. It's a pity the inventor died. He would have had a clock by this time that could have been elected street commissioner or something of that kind, and another one, perhaps, that could sail in and keep double entry books and mind the flies off the type-writer at the same time.

From Strasburg I went to Mayence, and from Mayence by steamer down the Rhine to Cologne.

#### THE SCENERY OF THE RHINE

is not as savage or ferocious as I had supposed, but it is nevertheless grand. Each bend of the stream reveals a crag or a peak, or a castle, and each are laden with legends of so improbable a character that no one pretends to believe them except as a matter of courtesy to the attendant, who accompanies each steamer to explain them. Our first stop was at Bingen. I used to speak a piece when I was a boy on something about "Bingen on the Rhine," but it has been so long since I was a boy that I have forgotten it.

I went down the Rhine on the Fourth of July. Some American acquaintances I met on the boat and myself viewed considerable of the scenery through the bottom of a tilted glass. Although, as I said, the scenery is not ferocious, I noticed it improved as our celebration proceeded. We had

no flags nor firecrackers, so we were obliged to celebrate with the make-shift mentioned.

We arrived at Cologne in the evening. This is the place from which we receive our "Eau de Cologne"—made in New York. I believe the perfumery drummer denied this, however. He said it was a lie; that rents were too high in New York and they made it in Brooklyn. I visited the establishment of the original distiller of the article—Johann Maria Farina. I went through the cathedral at Cologne. It is five hundred and thirty feet in length, the two main towers being of the same height, which would make them three hundred and twenty-eight feet four inches above the extreme height of our court house dome. The contents of the treasury, although having suffered great losses through the ravages of war, are still estimated at the value of a million and a half dollars. About fifty miles from Cologne is Aix-la-Chapelle, where Emory P. Beauchamp served as United States Consul.

The morning following my arrival in Cologne,

ANOTHER VERY PECULIAR MISTAKE IN LANGUAGE  
OCCURRED.

I asked the waiter to send up a barber to my room (a very common custom in Europe) but instead of a barber he sent up a doctor. The waiter could understand but little English and the doctor none at all. I thought sure I would be raped with an emetic before I could get rid of that Dutch pill bags, but, after exhausting all my powers of pantomime, I finally got clear of him. I don't know that the waiter made such a terrible mistake after all, however, for, as I have said, the day before was the Fourth of July, and there may have been more misery on my face than whiskers.

From Cologne I went to Amsterdam, Holland, and thence to Rotterdam. Rotterdam is a city of about two hundred



and fifty thousand inhabitants, many of whom I am satisfied are Dutch. There is no timber in Holland. It has

ALL GONE UP IN WOODEN SHOES LONG AGO,

but it is the most prosperous country I saw in my travels by all odds. It is a land of wind mills and dykes and canals, and is away below the level of the sea—the ship's hold being about even with the house tops. A spirit level and a jack plane couldn't make the surface more uniform. But they are prosperous. It is true their houses are sometimes constructed so the cow could eat hay off the piano, and when they are short a horse they hitch up the hired girl, but there are no beggars there—at least I saw none.

I kept an expense account so far along as Holland, but while looking at it I found such an interminable mixture of francs, centimes, livres, marks, pfennigs, florens, guilders, etc., that I threw it away. It wasn't of any use anyway. I knew how much money I had when I started, and

I THINK I KNOW WHEN I'M BROKE.

From Rotterdam I went to Brussels, Belgium. Artemus Ward once claimed to have raked in a few dimes by charging admission to an open top tent to view a total eclipse of the sun. The man that paid for the privilege was a financier of rare ability in comparison to the one that would invest in a trip to the battlefield of Waterloo, which I did. It is about a two-hours' drive from Brussels, and when the conveyance reached my hotel the inside had its complement of passengers, and I rode on the driver's seat. It rained all the way out, all the way back, and all the time we were there.

It was more like the Waterfield of Battleloo to me, and is the biggest humbug afloat. We spent \$10 apiece for the privilege of wading through an oatsfield in the rain and have a guide explain in some mongrel language what Wellington

said and what Napoleon said back again, and where some General fell, and where another didn't fall, but he couldn't tell for the life of him which side licked, and insisted all the way through

#### THAT NAPOLEON WAS KILLED THERE.

We bought a few brass buttons as souvenirs that were made and rusted to order over in Birmingham, England, and spent the balance of the time fighting off beggars and hotel drummers until it was time to start back. I was told by a man in the hotel at Brussels afterwards that there was a factory in Birmingham that did nothing else but make these buttons, and had their method of rusting patented, but I don't know as to that. I wouldn't want to accuse anyone wrongfully. They may never have thought of it.

I noticed in the Brussels directory the name of Louis Genis, who was formerly a resident of Terre Haute.

From Brussels I went to London. It was a great pleasure to me to cross a little sheet of water—the straits of Dover—and find myself in a country where I didn't have to

#### HIRE SOME ONE AT SO MUCH A WORD

to tell me where I was, who I was, or whether I was at all or not. I experienced this in coming from Belgium to England. I made signs, as a matter of habit, for the first few days, with everything I said, but soon found them superfluous. Londoners say that London will be a large place when it is finished. During the busy grip season in London last winter, over one thousand persons died daily from this disease alone. Inasmuch as there is a birth every eight minutes, it doesn't matter much how many die. London was ablaze with glory and royalty when I was there, on account of a visit of the Emperor and Empress of Germany, accompanied by a brigade or two of Dukes, Admirals, etc.

By a queer coincidence, we arrived on the same day, but if it were a preconcerted plan on the part of the citizens I had no knowledge of it.

I met the Consul General there, Mr. John C. New, a resident of Indianapolis, who lives at the hotel at which I stopped in London. I also met a brother of James and Ellis Nichols.

Ever since the year that one of our assessors returned the average weight of the fat hogs of his township at forty-one thousand pounds each I have been somewhat shaky on statistics and hefty figures. I swallow them as a kind of a statistical emetic. I will give you a dose of some I obtained from a little book descriptive of the Crystal Palace, which I visited, located at Sydenham, about half an hour by rail from London. It states that the panes of glass used in its construction if placed end to end would extend two hundred and forty-two miles. It contains nine thousand six hundred and forty-two tons of iron, fastened by one hundred and seventy-five tons of bolts and rivets, and one hundred tons of nails were driven into the softer parts of the structure. There are sixty miles of hot-water pipes, and the fountains play eleven thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight jets, throwing one hundred and twenty thousand gallons of water a minute, and a great display consumes six million gallons. It was opened October 28th, 1854, and since that time, if the turnstiles have made no mistakes,

#### OVER ONE HUNDRED MILLION PERSONS

have visited it, the gross receipts expended by them being estimated at about two million dollars. In the culinary department they have a quarter of a million plates, eight thousand side dishes, ten thousand forks and spoons, twenty thousand knives and eighteen thousand wine glasses. Twelve pages of the book are covered with these kind of statements,

but I suppose what I have given you is sufficient for one dose. I won't stand responsible for a solitary figure. They may be correct. On the other hand, there might have been half a dozen or so of the plates and dishes that were a little cracked or chipped which they did not count at all. I was there on a fete day, which occurs every Thursday, and stayed to witness the fireworks and illumination, which are on a scale of gorgeousness attempted nowhere else in the world.



## LETTER IV.

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### A VISIT TO WINDSOR CASTLE AND IRELAND.

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A PARTY was going to Windsor Castle, the country home of the Queen, about an hour out by rail from London, and I went along. We went on the wrong day, as the state apartments are not open to visitors each day in the week, and the private apartments never, except by an order from the Lord Chamberlain, which he never grants—to visitors, at least. Of course, we didn't exactly expect to dine with the Queen, and lounge around cross-legged on her private divans and vis-a-vis, but we did expect to be permitted to breathe the air of the same country without our right to it being questioned. The main entrance was guarded by forty-two red coats with golden throat latches; twenty-one on each side of the entrance. We appointed our best orator as Ex-postulator General, and he delivered an eloquent appeal for admittance. Those lackeys were either petrified "by order of the Queen," or paralyzed by our foreman's address, for they neither spoke nor moved. We gave it up, and dined at a beer saloon outside the castle walls. By a little stratagem we were afterwards admitted, however at one of the rear gates by a servant, where we had

### A VERY FINE VIEW OF THE BEST OUT-HOUSES.

I didn't care much about seeing the fat, stuffy old Queen, anyway. Remove her crown and robes of office, and she would look more like the proprietress of a country-road house than anything else, unless her photographer lies. Besides, I had seen plenty of royalty anyway, The Queen of Italy, the Prince of Naples, Kaiser and Kaiseress Wilhelm,

His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, and a car load or two of Dukes, Lords, Counts, Sirs, etc. They had grown as common to me as country squires.

London can take care of her immense passenger traffic better than any city I saw in Europe. Paris has nothing but cabs—no street cars at all. London, in addition to twelve thousand omnibuses, holding sixteen inside and twenty on top, has a system of underground railways. These lines run in tunnels beneath the cellars and sewers, one line forming a complete band around the city. One can get around without a guide in London, but it is much better to have one. I employed one the entire time, which probably

#### REDUCED MY STAY IN LONDON ONE HALF,

besides getting rid of the vexation of hunting up the places of interest. This guide knew London as well as I do Terre Haute, and I think I saw everything there that was of interest to me, from the haunts of Jack, the Ripper, to Spurgeon's Tabernacle.

From London I went to Stratford-on-Avon, the birth and burial-place of Uncle Billy Shakespeare. The village in itself is of no particular interest, except that it is in Shakespeare's land. His birthplace is a very small, mean-looking edifice of wood and plaster, the ceilings and walls covered with the names and inscriptions of visitors from all nations and climes, including the autograph of Sir Walter Scott traced on a window.

Nothing of that kind is permitted now, however; no one being even allowed to touch the walls. Every part and parcel of the building and surroundings are zealously guarded. I believe if a man should accidentally run a splinter in his finger from the fence they would make him pull it out then and there and leave it. No lights or fires are permitted, the

building being heated by steam from a plant a long way removed.

The house where I was born has been torn down years ago, and the last time I passed there the site was sowed in turnips. Perhaps whole bricks at a time from my birth-place have helped to arbitrate dog fights, and for all I know, the shingles have been used to boil soap. This shows the difference in the reverence of people for great persons.

Twenty-two thousand visitors registered at his birthplace last year. It is customary for every one that makes a visit there to sit in Shakespeare's chair, perhaps for the purpose of imbibing some of the inspiration of the great bard. Though built of solid oak,

#### IT IS SAT IN SO MUCH

that it has to be re-bottomed every year or two. Another peculiar thing I heard about the chair was, that it was sold years ago to some northern princess, yet, strange to say, it has found its way back to its former haunts in the old chimney corner. There are many objects of curiosity in and around the house, especially in the museum and library. The church in which he is buried is not far from the birth-place. It stands on the banks of the Avon. A flat stone marks the spot, with four lines inscribed upon it, said to have been written by himself:

“Good friends, for Jesus’ sake, forbear  
To dig the dust enclosed here.  
Blessed be he who spares these stones,  
And cursed be he that moves my bones!”

His bust is in a niche in the wall, said to have been placed there soon after his death. It's a kind of a

"DROP A NICKEL IN THE SLOT AND SEE HOW IT WORKS"  
CHURCH,

there being many catch-penny devices in operation for various causes and purposes. I stopped over night at the Shakespeare Hotel, recommended by my hotel guide book as being very old-fashioned and most comfortable. I can cheerfully bear testimony to the first statement. The rooms are all named after his plays and selections from his works. I occupied "Hamlet." Somehow I couldn't keep from inferring that an insinuation was intended that the room was to a Ham-let.

From Stratford I went to Birmingham, where they make everything in metal from a needle to an anchor. I did not go over Birmingham much from the fact that I couldn't get over it. The Prince of Wales was there, and so was everybody else. The entire city was wrapped up in streamers, flags and bunting. One that didn't know couldn't tell of what material the buildings were constructed. I wanted to stop over night, but couldn't even find a place to stand up in a hotel,

NOR ANYTHING TO LEAN AGAINST

except somebody else. Everything was leased. Starch boxes rented at a shilling a minute to get a sight of His Highness. As I had seen him in London, and he turned out to be nothing but a man after all, I didn't chew the rag much for a second sight. He was there for the purpose of opening the new law court building, or Court of assizes, as they called it.

It seems that the Prince opens everything in England from a jackpot up. He had just completed a trial, while I was in London, for opening up his baccarat lay out down at some country races.



As soon as I could disentangle to the front, I left Birmingham for Holyhead, the embarking point for Ireland. I asked an attendant at the Birmingham depot if a certain train was the one for Holyhead. He said: "No, sir,

HIT'S NOT THE TRAIN FOR 'OLY'HEAD.

The train for 'Oly'ead comes hin hon the hother track, sir, just hon the hopposite platform, sir. It seems to me that even Hoosiers talk better English than this.

I simply passed through the little principality of Wales, and couldn't say much about it, arriving at Holyhead late in the evening, crossing the Irish Sea at night and arriving in Dublin before daylight the next morning. I went to bed, and when I woke up I wasn't sure just what country I was in until I pulled aside the window curtain and read the sign of "Plunkett & O'Dowd," across the way. I thought from this

PERHAPS IT MIGHT BE IRELAND,

but when I dressed and got down to breakfast and read in the morning papers about the shortest and most direct routes to Skibbereen, Ballyshannon, Dounpatrick, Carrickfergus, etc., I would have almost sworn it was.

Although the capital of Ireland is always Dublin, still it hasn't such a large population. (I found this joke in a little work called the "History of the Chestnut.")

The sights of Dublin are very easily seen in one day.

I went from Dublin to several other Irish cities, all of which possess more or less interest, but none that I could relate anyways briefly in a letter except, perhaps, that Limerick is noted for the excellence of its fish hooks, and Tipperary as the birthplace of Cap. Hector.

Ireland has plenty of poverty and rags, but bless their generous souls, they always stand Pat on sharing them with

you. I found this out by a two-days' trip around and through County Kerry in one of those Irish mis-carriages, called

#### A JAUNTING CAR,

The only vehicle for which I ever paid so much an hour to see whether I could ride it or not. For real comfort I should rather ride a flying Dutchman. A man is always two or three inches shorter when he gets back than when he started. I don't see why Buffalo Bill don't use them instead of bucking ponies. They are a good deal harder to ride. A bucking pony would be a pleasure yacht compared with a jaunting car. If ever I ride another one I will hire the driver to lead me from behind. My driver's name was Jerry O'Donoghue. I didn't ask him about it, but I was satisfied that if his lineage was rigidly traced it would probably prove that his early ancestors were part Irish. He talked incessantly.

#### IF I HAD TO PAY HIM AT BANKRUPT RATES

for half he told me I would have had to send home for more money. I was told on that trip by several persons that Ireland was being rapidly depopulated by immigration, and that each enumeration of her inhabitants showed a great decrease in population, but at that time I couldn't believe it. If all the other counties have the same boom in the "kid" industry that Kerry has, I don't believe it yet. It overshadows every other enterprise. If Ireland is losing her population it's not that county's fault. They have heard the same story, but they don't stand around and let the country go to the dogs for the want of somebody to live in it. How on earth two parents, who haven't much idea of system and less of arithmetic, can keep track of

## THE WONDERFUL PRODIGY OF PROGENY

with which some of these hampered households are blessed, puzzles me. They may have an arrangement for counting them something like we do billiards; every time there's twins, shove up two points, and so on. At any rate I am certain that none of them ever got away.

Although I had a ticket for a three days' trip through the Lakes of Killarney, I gave two of them up. I felt as though I had had enough scenery to last me through all eternity, and that if I had taken a light emetic I could have thrown up any number of mountains ordered, and fetch up on the lastretch with a blazing volcano for good measure. I would have left a mountain that the moon couldn't get past to see the scenery of Sahara. I can't help but admit, however, that what I saw of the Killarney country was splendid. The route was lined with beggars, as all such places are in Europe, but they were not the stolid, heartless beggars I had met elsewhere. They pretended to give you something for donations. It was generally based on a very fictitious value, but it was something. For instance, boys would follow us for miles wanting change for a cent, and bare-footed and brown-haired maidens never deserted us during the entire trip, dispensing what they called "rile mountain dew." They carried it under their arms and claimed that it absorbed milk from the breast, which made it a most delicious beverage. I couldn't see how sweat would do bad whisky any good, but I tried it. I am sure Jim Red would have spit it out, but I swallowed it. If there had been an undertaker handy I would have died, but as there was no conveniences about for dying I gave it up. Every turn of the road a blind fiddler rose up and played a tune they called

"WHAT THE DEVIL AILS YOU!"

As they were all playing the same tune, I asked one of them

why so. He said it was their day for playing it. Cannoniers and buglers riled the mountain echoes at so much per rille and echo. This is a little taste of the gauntlet one has to run in going through Killarney, but I think I enjoyed the change in beggars about as much as the scenery.

From Killarney I went to Cork, where I spent a couple of days; but there is not much to be seen there. It is a city of about forty-five thousand inhabitants.

From Cork I went to Blarney Castle. Blarney Castle, so I was informed, was built by one Cormack McCarthy, whoever he was, in 1449. It is annually visited by thousands, not for any special interest it possesses as a castle, or ruin, but because it contains the celebrated Blarney stone.

The original Blarney stone, however, is now inaccessible, as it is protected by heavy iron spikes placed on the top of the tower. In order to

#### OSCULATE THE BLARNEY STONE PROPERLY,

it was necessary to let the devotees hang full length down from the top of the tower and have someone hold to their heels. On several occasions the party that had contracted to do the holding on got to thinking about something else and let go. As it is about one hundred and thirty feet from the Blarney stone proper down to the less favored ones in the foundation, it was found that this system of kissing was also tending to Ireland's depopulation, hence, the iron spikes. The back of the stone is now kissed from the inside of the castle, which is entirely safe and, no doubt, just as good. I can't see why any one should want to kiss it anyway. It's like kissing a cow's nose compared to what's on tap on Irish maidens' lips in and around the village of Blarney. Whole cargoes

#### BLOSSOM, BUD, RIPEN AND SPOIL

every day for the want of being plucked. It's about like



eating green persimmons when you have ripe peaches on the same plate. That is, I should think so. I didn't have the common gallantry to sample it, but still I think I know a good article of this kind when I see it. But the Irish lads kiss the Blarney stone for the purpose of imparting its powers to the lassies, so they say. They firmly believe

“ There is a stone there, whoever kisses,  
Oh, he never misses to grow eloquent ;  
'Tis he that may clamber to a lady's chamber  
Or become a member of sweet Parliament.  
A clever spouter he'll sure turn out, or  
An out and outer to be let alone.  
Don't hope to hinder him or to bewilder him,  
Sure he's a pilgrim from the Blarney stone.”

The Irish are great on poetry, of which the foregoing is a sample. They can't draw in a long breath of air

#### WITHOUT SPILLING A LOT OF POETRY

all over everything. I bought a book containing three thousand pieces for five cents, and could have got enough for a dollar to fill a corn-crib.

From Blarney I went to Queenstown. Queenstown was once the leading commercial city of Ireland, but her commerce has long since departed. She subsists now almost entirely through strangers that land and embark at her wharves. Her population of ten thousand is very fairly divided between jaunting car drivers, shillaly and shamrock peddlers and beggars. I spent perhaps a dollar altogether on the beggars of Queenstown at a penny apiece, and received more prayers and blessings for the investment than I could have bought in the regular way for three hundred dollars. But they are just as heavily charged with imprecations and curses if you don't give them something as they are with prayers if you do. It would be hard to strike off a

spiritual balance sheet on the basis of their blessings and blasphemies.

Although large quantities of whisky are drank in Ireland no one ever saw snakes. St. Patrick in his celebrated ordinance regulating snakes in Ireland, made it impossible for them to stay there with any comfort. There is not a snake in the entire island. This may have been all right, but somehow I can't think much of a man that would drive a lot of snakes off on to his neighbors.

There are more people in London alone than there is in all Ireland.

Ireland is the coldest country to the size of it I ever saw. I never was a night within its borders without a fire, and every day I had an overcoat.